

# The History of Christianity

(taken from Eerdmans' Handbook to the History of Christianity)

Vol. 1, Issue 8

## Introduction: The Christian Centuries, Part 6

(excerpts from Robert D. Linder's introduction)

**Renewal through monasticism.** The struggle of Christian leaders to stem the Muslim tide and battle great temporal lords like Charlemagne for control of the institutional church led to an attempt to strengthen the papacy, to prevent such intrusions. This, in turn, often diverted the successive popes from more pressing spiritual matters. The papacy and Western Christianity limped along for nearly 500 years, reaching a low-point of spiritual prestige and power in the tenth century.

Then, spiritual renewal began to sweep through the Western world, starting with the foundation of the monastery of Cluny in central France in 910. Cluny attempted to go back to the purity of the original monasteries started in the West by Benedict of Nursia (480-547). But whereas Benedict sought to segregate his monks from society, Cluny tried to integrate monasticism and society.

Cluny became the focal point of a new reform movement in the West. The Cluniacs wanted to stamp out the practice of buying and selling church offices (simony), re-establish the celibacy of the clergy, and eliminate corruption from the church. They intended to achieve these reforms from the top downwards through a spiritually

revitalized pope who shared their reforming goals. They finally accomplished this in the person of Pope Gregory VII (1077-88).

Other new monastic orders replaced Cluny when it faltered in its reforming zeal in the 11<sup>th</sup> century. Bernard of Clairvaux (1090-1153) and the Cistercians in the 12<sup>th</sup> century. Francis of Assisi (1182-1226) and the Franciscans, and Dominic (1170-1221) and the Dominicans in the 13<sup>th</sup> century, were only the most prominent of dozens of new orders founded. All of these helped prepare a basis for raising the spiritual level of the professed Christianity of Western Europeans and for a new wave of missionary endeavor.



Benedictine Monks

## “Distractions”

### 1 Timothy 2:8-15

July 27, 2025

Hartford Bible Church, Pastor Dan Hummel

**List some distractions you have that keep you from doing what the Lord wants to have you do:**

**List distractions in the Ephesian church Paul mentions in 1 Timothy 1:3-7:**

**List distractions in the Ephesian church Paul mentions in 1 Timothy 4-6:**

**List *specific* distractions in the Ephesian church Paul mentions in today's passage:**

**List *general* distractions in churches today Pastor Dan mentioned:**